L: Hawkins E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 972 Haiti 972
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tinal structure with rounded arches in the Roman style, roofed over, like most other buildings, with galvanized iron. Other public buildings are the town hall — the *Mairie* — and the "Hall of Justice"; near by are the stone walls of a public building begun some years ago as a school, but destined apparently to house what is known as the "Bureau of Contributions," a euphemism for the tax-collector's quarters. Despite the fact that Mirebalais was one of the most difficult regions for the American occupation to subdue during the Caco uprising of 1918–20,[19] it was one of the first districts where the Gendarmerie d'Haïti was completely Haitianized, and from which all American Marine officers were withdrawn. Only a small detachment is stationed there at present. Its well-kept barracks are near the church, and the prisons form a part of the same compound, from whence issue daily the striped-suited prisoners, men and women, under guard or alone on parole, who do communal work in the town and the near-by countryside.

The town awakens at dawn to the chattering of domesticated guinea-fowl and the crowing of cocks. Occasionally a camion rumbles through the principal thoroughfare; more rarely an automobile dashes by in great clouds of dust on its way to Las Cahobas, or Hinche, or Santo Domingo City. If it is a market day, the streets are early filled with country folk on their way to dispose of their produce, and the clatter from the market place behind the church is heard everywhere until the heat of the day brings a lull to all commerce, and drowsiness once more settles over everything. By mid-afternoon during the planting season, drums can be heard over the countryside. The sounds are not those of the "throbbing" *vodun* drums — though they have more than once been mistaken for them by travelers — but they set the rhythm for the communal work of the *combites*, which perform cooperative agricultural labor. As the rapid dusk follows the disappearance of the sun behind the mountains, the voices of

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There are sections, particularly in the capital, in which shanties more resembling chicken coops than dwellings house whole families under leaky roofs of crude thatch. Privacy, cleanliness, sanitation, are not to be thought of. That the sun is warm in Haiti is a blessing, for cold would creep through the gaping walls. Where the shanty dwellers go in the rain, where they get their food, what relieves the dreary round of daily monotony the important people of Haiti do not know, nor do many of them seem to care. President Vincent undertook to clear away a section of the most abject slums in Port-au-Prince, erected in their place a series of two-room (likewise two-family) houses about a central square. Compared with the hovels they replaced the new houses are palatial; compared with houses Americans would consider adequate, they look more like unimaginative garages. With what rapidity an epidemic of serious nature might sweep the lower sections of the city, which are but one vast slum, is a thought too harrowing to entertain.

In the whole city there are hardly half a dozen buildings which would detain the lover of architecture. The president's palace is a gleaming white structure, somewhat resembling the White House in Washington. With its background of lofty mountains it makes an impressive picture, although it stands naked in the vast public square of the city. Young palm trees are now growing in the square, and may before many years provide for the palace the setting it deserves. Inside the palace one's chief impression is of emptiness. Other government buildings range from plain white edifices which fulfill their practical function without any suggestion of aesthetic graciousness, down through the inferior grades to wooden structures which one passes without a second glance. The cathedral, placed upon an eminence, is unattractive both in its exterior and in the glaring interior. Upon one of its finger towers at night gleams a light to guide ships into the harbor. The clubs and a few of the villas are pleasant to look at; the colleges of the lay brothers are impressively large, but bespeak the provincial town.

Indeed, one wanders up and down the country in search of man-made beauty and finds only two examples, both partially ruined, and both in the North: Christophe's magnificent citadel, La Ferrière, and the shattered shell of his charming palace, Sans Souci.

The citadel is breath-taking. Astride a great peak the huge edifice resembles the mighty beak of a ship about to soar off into the atmosphere. Inside one can wander through endless vaults, gaze from

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712 the battlements far off across the torturous mass of mountains and
[713] green valleys, admire the sheer strength of will which made His Majesty's subjects bear four hundred cannon up the steep and rocky path—not to mention thousands of cannon balls now rusting away after a century of disuse, or the powder and shot which once filled
[713] the magazines. It is said that five thousand soldiers could be housed
[703] in the fortress at once. If this is hyperbole, one hardly dare challenge it, for the whole Citadel belittles the individual man. It is likewise said that Christophe once made a battalion of soldiers march off the cliff to their death merely to demonstrate his absolute control over
[566] them. Such stories grow up around His Black Majesty. He lies entombed in his useless but still superb fortress—and lives in the memory of the Northerners, one of whom said proudly: "We of the North have a great heritage, and you will find that we are all dominated by *une psychologie citadelienne*."

Dungeons, secret passages, royal apartments, separate rooms for each of the old Dutch, Spanish, French, and English cannon, some of them dating back to the seventeenth century—all the paraphernalia of the storybook fortress is present. From a bastion one gazes, as from an alp, for miles in any direction, and feels that La Ferrière is certainly one of the most impressive, and one of the most futile, edifices in the world. If the silent cannon had ever been fired, their balls would have rumbled harmlessly down the mountainside. The suspicion grows that Christophe achieved his architectural miracle not primarily as a defense against the French, but to make his subjects proud of what a nation of despised ex-slaves could accomplish.

344 Five miles away, at the foot of the mountain, is the village of
644 Milot, with the ruins of the palace of Sans Souci. Of yellow stone, it spreads out spaciously like a French château. Its rooms must have been magnificent. The palace is so situated that one may look out across the northern plains to the sea, or up the valleys to mountain peaks. In Sans Souci Christophe shot himself in 1820 when he knew that only *souci* would remain to him if he lived.

489 Transportation from one part of the country to another is far from
[496] easy. There are no railroads—unless one counts the short line running north a few miles from Port-au-Prince to nowhere in particular, and the equally short line coming west into Cap-Haïtien from the fields
[491] of the northern plain. Roads built by the American Marines make automobile travel between the main towns possible, if one does not